

Sexual objectification in online Nigerian pop music videos and self-objectification among teenagers in South- South, Nigeria.

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Abstract

This paper examined the correlation between exposure to sexual objectification in online music videos and self-objectification among teenagers in South-South Nigeria. The study was anchored on objectification and social theory. The research objective was met using the survey research design. A sample size of 432 respondents was drawn from the population of teenagers South- South, Nigeria based on using the sampling system of Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2007) at 95% confidence level. Simple random, quota and cluster sampling techniques were adopted for accessing the sample. Results showed a strong correlation implying explicitly that exposure to sexual objectification elements in online Nigerian pop music videos contributes significantly to self-objectification among teenagers in South –South, Nigeria. It was thus recommended that there should be a conscious effort by all industry stakeholders to practice self-regulation and produce Nigerian music pop music videos with less sexual contents.

Keywords: Sexual Objectification, self-objectification..

Introduction

Socialization is a learning process in which people acquire information through various media and consciously or unconsciously adapt to it. In the present age, the tenets of socialization have created realities that people perceive as ideals and within the space of interactions work towards conforming to such constructions. The various institutions in the society such as churches, schools, businesses, and the media package experiences such that the public key in accordingly. This aligns with the position of Schutz (1970) that the media's construction of reality may become part of the society since no one can question the development. This, therefore, implicates the media in the shaping of societal view, they account for the reasons why individuals view the world the way they do.

Music videos are an integral aspect of the media, as it embodies various elements of pop culture which captivate the youth. Its use of audio visual effects to portray trending life styles, dances, music and language enhances its ability to draw the attention of the youth. Music videos often contain themes of sex, love than lay emphases on sexuality. Teenagers who are the major consumers of these music videos are exposed to sexual objectifying elements that have the potential to trigger observational behavior such as self objectification. A recent study has shown that there is a significant relationship between consuming sexually objectifying media, internalizing the message, self-objectification and body surveillance (Vandenbosch and Eggermont, 2012).

Arugu and Ihejirika (2019) established the presence of various elements of sexual objectification in select online Nigerian pop music videos. These elements include various forms of body revelation, sexual gestures and dance styles that are sexually objectifying. The study also established the predominance of sexually objectifying lyrics that make reference to body parts, intercourse and sexual prowess.

Karsay, Johannes and Matthes (2017) observed that most studies on media exposure and self-objectification were carried out within the "Western bubble", ninety-six percent of the studies investigated originated from North America, Europe, or Australia and Oceania. Only two studies were from Asia and none from Latin America or Africa. Karsay, Johannes and Matthes (2017) therefore recommend the need to test the cross-cultural application of objectification theory, specifically Africa.

The present study seeks to fill this gap by examining the effects of exposure to sexualization and self-objectification as mediator to other behavioural influences and also test the applicability of objectification theory within Africa continent.

Despite increasing knowledge about the effects of sexual music videos, there remains a dearth in literature on the correlation between exposure to sexual objectification and teenage behaviour or specifically self-objectification in Nigeria. The crux of this study is to fill this gap through an investigation seeking to establish the correlation between exposure to sexual objectification material and self-objectification.

Statement of the problem

A cursory look at online music videos by Nigerian artistes shows that body parts or sexual body parts are mostly the objects of central attraction. These videos depict women and men as mere sexual objects, present only for the viewer's pleasure (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Emphases on sexual body parts therefore indirectly impose an objectifying gaze upon viewers. Exposure to sexually objectifying media not only affects how individuals perceive the video vixens themselves, but how they see themselves. Studies have established the predominance of sexually objectifying lyrics that make reference to body parts, intercourse and sexual prowess in Nigerian Online Music videos. Further, women and men are more preoccupied with displaying some parts of the body like, the stomach, thighs, buttocks, chest, cleavage and back., sexual body parts such as cleavage, the stomach and the pelvis, is an indicator of sexual objectification (Hall, West, and McIntyre, 2012, Arugu & Ihejirika, 2019).

In the light these exposures by teenagers to the sexual objectifying elements in online Nigerian pop music videos, there is a lack of empirical findings to establish the existence of self-objectification by teenagers due to exposure to sexual objectification in online music videos. The study was restricted to teenagers between the ages of 13 and 19 years in South-South, Nigeria.

The aforementioned encapsulates the problem of this study and therefore rationalizes undertaking an inquiry to ascertain if exposure to sexual objectification in online music videos leads to self-objectification by teenagers in South-South Nigeria. The question then is : what is the relationship between exposure to sexual objectification in select online music videos and self-objectification among teenagers in South-South, Nigeria?

Aim and objectives

The aim and objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between exposure to sexual objectification in select online music videos and self-objectification among teenagers in South-South, Nigeria.

Literature review

Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory was propounded by Albert Bandura in 1986, the theory stipulates that People learn from what they observe in the society through the various agencies such environment has made available. The theory provides the framework to explain some of the media effects on certain class of audiences such as children and youths. Social learning theory is variously identified as Social Cognitive Theory or Observational Learning Theory (Baran and Davis, 2009; McQuail, 2010). A fundamental ideology behind the theory is the impossibility of individuals to learn or the greater amount of what is needed to steer the development as well as behaviour through express individual observation and contact only. A lot of the learning needs to come from mediated sources like the mass media.

The social learning theory explains how individuals observe and learn from their environment, which is why it is described as a social cognitive process. Bandura (1994) states that the "Social cognitive theory explains the psychosocial functioning in terms of triadic reciprocal causation. In this model of reciprocal determinism, behaviour; cognitive, biological and other personal factors and environmental events all operate as interacting determinants that influence each other bidirectionally" (p. 61). Thus, the understanding is that the media does not have effects on audience but there are other factors in the society that equally play significant roles in the process of social learning outside the facts that the individual has to be actively engaged. The place of social learning cannot be overemphasized in objectification process.

Succinctly, Kistler and Lee (2009) state that due to the pervasive nature of music, heavy music consumers are often influenced by the laissez-faire sexual approach in Hip Hop and pop music.

The subject of the influence of sexual objectification in online Nigerian music videos on teenagers in South-South Nigeria is one that affects the socialization experience in the country. Virtually all objectifications in online music videos deal on symbolic contents. Teenagers learn dress culture and appearance from what they often see. For instance, a good number of hairdo and tattoo that young people wear stem from what they watch from models in the television.

Objectification and Sexual Objectification

According to Fredrickson and Roberts(1997) objectification is “the experience of being treated as a body (or collection of body parts) valued predominantly for its use (or consumption by) others” (p.174). Sexual objectification refers to the act of watching or using or estimating a human being as a thing, that is, as an object that has value only as long as the physical and sexual attractiveness is decipherable and obtainable. Moradi (2010) and Zurbriggen (2013) have extended the scope of the concept to say that sexual objectification could also be shot of sexual nature because it also connotes the social force of creating, nurturing and presenting a delectable appearance.

The concept of sexual objectification is one that its application is common in the contemporary society owing to the spate of socialization taking hold on cultures. And rightly so, Nussbaum (1995) believes that the concept is common, but the use of the word itself may not be well known to many people though its meaning is a common reality. There is the argument that one can be easily objectified, however, the moment an individual is made an object of another’s desire, be it by consent or without consent, intentional or unintentional and irrespective of the victim’s internalization of it or not, has become a source of satisfaction for another (Scott and Tuana, 2016). This is because to objectify is the viewing of something as an object to satisfy one’s desire (Haslanger, 2002), that is, such a thing has the nature to be desired of. From the 1970s, the issue of sexual objectification had been of concern to many minds. Dworkin (1974) laments that “It is true, and very much to the point, that women are objects, commodities, some deemed more expensive than others – but it is only by asserting one’s humanness every time, in all situations, that one becomes someone as opposed to something, that, after all, is the core of our struggle” (p. 83).

Although Bordo (1999) underscores contemporary times where there is a myriad of men magazines that teach men how to look desirable, what creams to use and other instructions on diets and how to be more muscular. Therefore it means that the girl to look desirable and sexy is no longer the prerogatives of the general folk, the men equally reveal parts of their bodies in order to appear sexy and desirable. Seidman (1992), in an analysis of 182 music videos observe that 37% of women, as opposed to 4% of men, wore revealing clothing. Goodin, Van Denburg, Murenand Smolak (2011) coded sexualized body parts as , the waist , chest, buttocks and legs, and as such the revealing of these body parts as sexual objectification.

Ronen, (2010) describes the explicit nature of the dance style “grinding” recorded during an observational study and compared it to like ‘having sex’ (p361).The popularity of lyrics means that it has been memorized and listeners often sing along to their favourite songs, this bestows on it the latent power to influence listeners and pull them into a social bond, influence attitudes even more than visual content (Greitemeyer, 2009 ;Cooper ,1985). There are various reasons whys we listen to music and the manner in which we respond to it differs, either physically by dancing or emotionally and cognitively. These three entail singing along to the lyrics, dancing and sexual arousal (Lull 1985). These cognitive processes (Frith, 1987) believe that the information in can be instilled in the thought and have perceptions framed on a conscious or unconscious level.

Self-Objectification

Self-objectification can be seen as the act of privileging one’s outward attractiveness over the inward attributes like the subjective minds about physical ability or health (Kirby, 2016). The focus of an individual is primarily based on the outward looks as deciphered from another person. In this process, one is constantly checking the body against what others think about self.

Fredrickson and Robert (1997) describe self-objectification as the process of taking on an observer's perspective and using it as an instrument to evaluate and access one's own body. Self-objectification has been considered as a trigger for various mental and physical health risks. Fredrickson and Robert (1997) argue that self-objectification speaks more of women's act of conducting themselves like objects to be viewed and assessed. They then identify specific signs to denote self-objectification as self-monitoring habit, self-surveillance and greater care about appearance. When these become the experience, women then depend on observers' point of view to access looks to determine the appropriate as well as what should be expected of others. Women are found to have accounted themselves as happier, more socially competent, balanced and progressive whenever they adjusted to the media ideal person, which made them consider self-objectification as a welcoming experience (Engeln-Maddox, 2006).

Classification of Music Videos.

Music videos are a strong source of entertainment for not just the old but also for the young. They serve all shades of people irrespective of age, gender and social class. It then follows that not all content from the music videos would be suitable for every kind of person. Each music video is, therefore, expected to serve the interest of a given audience, thus, the need classification of music videos. An illustration of the import of classification of music videos was the account of the international singer's case, Rihanna S & M single who was banned in not less than 11 countries (Andrews, 2014; Goodwyn, 2011). It was observed that the music video contained "ball gags, blow up dolls and fetish wear" and these were not appropriate underage viewers who are below 18 years. It warranted the former British Prime Minister, David Cameron to introduce stringent measures on what is acceptable within industry. The Former British prime minister David Cameron, commenting on the ratings by The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) believed that more should be done to harmonize the rules and rating so that as much as possible that exist offline should equally be applied online. (Clark, 2015)

In Nigeria, the need for classification of music videos is well espoused in the laws and policy frameworks obtainable. The government established the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) by Act No. 85 of 1993 as the regulatory agency for the film and video industry. Its key function is to classify films and videos that are locally produced or imported into the country.

Research Methodology

The study adopted the survey research design. The appropriateness of this design is captured by Baran (1999) who posits that survey is designed to scientifically describe a phenomena and their relationship in the actual environment at a given time. A sample size of 432 respondents was drawn from the population of teenagers South- South, Nigeria based on the sampling system of Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2007) at 95% confidence level. Simple random, quota and cluster sampling techniques were adopted for accessing the sample. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire. The items in the questionnaire were structured to measure the demographic and psychographics of respondents. The psychographic sets of items were designed to elicit data on respondents.

Results

Table 1: Cross tabulation of Age, gender and level of exposure to online Nigerian music videos

Age	Mild Exposure		Medium Exposure		Heavy Exposure		Total
	F	M	F	M	F	M	
13	5	6	4	6	15	18	54
14	3	5	8	7	22	25	70
15	5	3	6	13	13	17	57
16	1	2	5	8	25	37	78
17	0	0	2	5	15	14	36
18	0	0	2	6	9	12	29
19	0	0	20	11	39	35	105
	14	16	47	56	138	158	429
	30		103		296		

Data found in table 1 indicates that more than half of respondents were heavily exposed to online music videos. Medium exposure was significant while the least were those with mild exposure. This exposure level was

applied in grouping respondents. Group 1 comprised the respondents of mild exposure (30 respondents) while Group 2 comprised respondents of medium and heavy exposure (399 respondents).

Table 2: Exposure to Sexual objectification among teenagers in South-South, Nigeria

Indicators of Sexual objectification		Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Always	Total	W MS	Remarks
		1	2	3	4			
I often find that lyrics in ONPMV make sex appealing to me.	GRP 1	9 (2.25)	40 (5)	696 (58.15)	552 (34.6)	1297 (100)	3.2	Accepted
	GRP 2	15 (30.61)	22 (44.89)	12 (24.5)	0 (0)	49 (100)	1.6	Rejected
I have often used words from ONPMV to refer to sex.	GRP 1	0 (0)	100 (12.53)	603 (50.37)	597 (37.1)	1300 (100)	3.3	Accepted
	GRP 2	20 (66.67)	8 (13.33)	12 (20)	0 (0)	46 (100)	1.5	Rejected
I have often used words from ONPMV s to refer a man or woman.	GRP 1	4 (1)	20 (2.5)	840 (70.18)	420 (26.32)	1294 (100)	3.3	Accepted
	GRP 2	18 (60)	14 (23.33)	15 (16.67)	0 (0)	47 (100)	1.6	Rejected
I often find the body revealing cloths worn by the model/artiste in ONPMV sexy, beautiful and appealing.	GRP 1	0 (0)	118 (14.79)	603 (50.37)	556 (34.84)	1277 (100)	3.2	Accepted
	GRP 2	17 (55.66)	18 (30)	15 (16.67)	0 (0)	55 (100)	1.7	Rejected
I find the models in ONPMV are sexy and appealing.	GRP 1	1 (0.25)	4 (0.50)	885 (73.93)	404 (25.31)	1284 (100)	3.2	Accepted
	GRP 2	19 (63.33)	18 (30)	12 (6.67)	0 (0)	45 (100)	1.5	Rejected
I often find lyrics in Online ONPMV make sex appealing to me,	GRP 1	0 (0)	18 (30)	648 (54.13)	696 (43.61)	1363 (100)	3.4	Accepted
	GRP 2	21 (70.00)	16 (26.67)	3 (3.33)	0 (0)	41 (100)	1.4	Rejected
I often find gestures like licking of the lips and self touching in ONPMV sexually appealing to me.	GRP 1	2 (0.5)	120 (15.04)	609 (50.88)	536 (33.58)	1267 (100)	3.2	Accepted
	GRP 2	21 (70.00)	14 (23.33)	6 (6.67)	0 (0)	44 (100)	1.5	Rejected
I often find dance styles present in ONPMV like twerking and grinding are sexually suggestive but appealing to me.	GRP 1	0 (0)	94 (11.78)	531 (44.36)	700 (43.86)	1325 (100)	1.5	Accepted
	GRP 2	17 (56.67)	22 (36.67)	6 (6.66)	0 (0)	45 (100)	1.5	Rejected
Grinding, twerking , shimmying of the breast are dance styles I often copy.	GRP 1	0 (0)	104 (13.03)	291 (24.31)	1000 (62.66)	1395 (100)	3.5	Accepted
	GRP 2	20 (66.67)	16 (26.67)	8 (6.67)	0 (0)	44 (100)	1.5	Rejected

*Figures in parenthesis are percentages

*GRP 1-Group 1

*GRP 2-Group 2

*ONPMV – Online Nigerian Pop music video.

Table 2 reveals that nine indicators of sexual objectification were presented to the respondents stratified into two Groups namely Group 1 and 2. Indicators accepted by Group 1 were rejected in Group 2.

Table 3: Self Objectification among teenagers in South-South, Nigeria

Indicators	Groups	SD 1	D 2	A 3	SA 4	Total	W MS	Remarks
It is not offensive when words from music videos are use to refer to n	GRP 1	0 (0)	104 (13.03)	282 (23.56)	1012 (63.41)	1398 (100)	3.5	Accepted
	GRP 2	19 (63.33)	14 (23.33)	9 (10)	4 (3.33)	46 (100)	1.5	Rejected
Wearing body revealing cloths makes me sexy, beautiful a appealing to others.	GRP 1	0 (0)	22 (2.76)	561 (46.87)	804 (50.37)	1387 (100)	3.5	Accepted
	GRP 2	15 (50)	20 (33.33)	12 (13.33)	4 (3.33)	47 (100)	1.7	Rejected
I worry that I do not look sexy or appealing like the models/artiste ONPMV.	GRP 1	5 (1.25)	76 (9.52)	534 (44.61)	712 (44.61)	1328 (100)	3.3	Accepted
	GRP 2	20 (66.67)	14 (23.33)	15 (10)	0 (0)	45 (100)	1.5	Rejected
Being gazed and physically evaluated in a sexual way makes me feel valued and important.	GRP 1	0 (0)	100 (12.53)	516 (43.11)	708 (44.36)	1324 (100)	3.3	Accepted
	GRP 2	21 (70)	16 (26.67)	3 (3.33)	0 (0)	40 (100)	1.3	Rejected
I do not find it offensive when words from ONPMV are used to refer to me	GRP 1	0 (0)	40 (5.01)	564 (47.12)	764 (47.87)	1324 (100)	3.4	Accepted
	GRP 2	17 (56.67)	20 (33.33)	9 (10)	0 (0)	4 (100)	1.7	Rejected
It is important that my body is flexible enough for to twerk and grind.	GRP 1	0 (0)	70 (8.77)	657 (54.89)	580 (36.34)	1307 (100)	3.3	Accepted
	GRP 2	20 (66.67)	14 (23.33)	9 (10)	0 (0)	43 (100)	1.4	Rejected
I worry that I am not physically coordinated enough to twerk and grind properly.	GRP 1	5 (1.25)	98 (12.28)	603 (50.36)	576 (36.09)	1282 (100)	3.2	Accepted
	GRP 2	21 (70)	16 (26.67)	3 (3.33)	0 (0)	40 (100)	1.3	Rejected

*Figures in parenthesis are percentages

*GRP 1-Group 1

*GRP 2-Group 2

*ONPMV – Online Nigerian Pop music video

Table 3 presents data on self-objectification among teenagers in South-South Nigeria. Data shows that 7 indicators of self-objectification that were accepted by Group 1 were rejected by Group 2.

Table 4: Correlation between sexual objectification and self-objectification among teenagers in South-South, Nigeria

Test Variables		Sexual Objectification GROUP 1	Sexual Objectificati on GROUP 2	Self Objectification GROUP 1	Self Objectific ation GROUP 2
Sexual objectificati on	Pearson Correlation	1	1	0.780**	0.329
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.000	0.426
	N	399	30	399	30
Self Objectificat ion	Pearson Correlation	0.780**	0.329	1	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.426		

	N	399	30	399	30
	**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Table 4 shows a summation of the *Weighted Count* in all the variables as found in the *Total column* in Table 2 and 3 were exported to SPSS 22 version where the relationship was statistically evaluated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) technique.

Discussion

In addressing this research question, attention must be paid to data presented in table 4. A retrospective appraisal of the table also indicates that the p-value (0.000) in Group 1 is less than 0.01 while that of Group 2 (0.426) is higher than 0.01 significant levels (2-tailed) fixed for the test. Data contained therein leads to the inference that about 60.8% (Group 1) of self-objectification among teenagers in South-South, Nigeria is highly connected to sexual objectification in select online music videos which they are regularly exposed to at 99% level of confidence.

In a direct answer to this research question, it is, on the basis of data obtained; unequivocal to state that exposure to sexual objectification elements in online Nigerian pop music videos contributes significantly to self-objectification among teenagers in South –South, Nigeria.

Reflecting on the theories which underpinned this paper, it is clear that this finding has a relationship with the objectification and social learning. The objectification theory which was propounded by Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) argue that, self-objectification speaks more of women’s [men’s] act of conducting themselves like objects to be viewed and assessed. The objectification theory holds that whether by direct experience or an indirect encounter of others, sexual objectification in the media correlates numerous psychological outcomes such as sexualdysfunction, depression, internalization of outsider’s perception; that is, self-objectification, eating disorder, etc. This phenomenon is captured in Bartky’s (1990) description of an individual state of consciousness when being called names or being upon receiving catcall and whistled at “ I must be *made* to know that I am a “nice piece of ass”: I must be made to see myself as they see me. (p. 27)

when teenagers are exposed to elements of sexual objectification, like name calling that reduces an individual to body parts or objects, such as ‘bum bum’ ‘cassava’ ‘oreo’ , they invariably are likely to imbibe these perspective and view themselves as objects. They, as such, consciously use such perspective to continually evaluate themselves. Exposure to sexually objectifying contents in online Nigeria pop music videos triggers self objectification as this study has proven, which is one of the profound effects of sexual objectification; where an individual is socialized into adopting an observer’s perspective about themselves. In other words, people’s opinions, desires and claims become the mirror through which teenagers view themselves. The subject of the influence of sexual objectification in online Nigerian music videos on teenagers in South-South Nigeria is one that affects the socialization experience in the country. Virtually all objectifications in online music videos deal on symbolic contents. Teenagers learn dress culture and appearance from what they often see. For instance, a good number of hairdo and tattoo that young people wear stem from what they watch from models on television. McQuail (2005) observes that the media are ‘continually offering pictures of life and models of behaviour in advance of actual experience’ (p. 494). This therefore gives credence to the social learning theory by Albert Bandura. Degrading and sexualized music can teach both adolescent males and females that women are sexual objects that exist for the pleasure of others (Papadaki 2001). Exposure to such contents may teach adolescents to sexually objectify themselves and willingly presenting themselves as object for others’ use.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The advancements in information technology have created unfettered access to online music videos more than ever before. Access to mobile phones, tablets, laptop computers, and desktop computers have all contributed to teenagers having access to online music videos. In addition, Internet service has kept on getting cheaper everyday due to competition making it also possible for teenagers to access the World Wide Web with little or no financial constrains. Another dimension to unfettered access to online music videos is

the springing up of music streaming services. Several music video streaming and downloading sites have sprung up making it possible for artistes to upload music videos for teeming fans to download.

The result of evolving information society is that teenagers have become trendy and interested in following music stars and downloading their songs. On the relationship between sexual objectification in online Nigerian music videos and behavioural change in teenagers in South-South, Nigeria, this study has drawn conclusion on both theory and practice. In theory, the objectification theory has been tested and proven valid as results show that It is recommended that there should be a conscious effort by all industry stakeholders to practice self-regulation and produce Nigerian music pop music videos with less sexual contents.

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